

BROTHERHOOD IN
BROWNING

BY
MAUDE A. PRICE



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BROTHERHOOD IN BROWNING



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BY
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TO
MY SISTER
MRS. VIOLA PRICE FRANKLIN
TO WHOM I OWE MY FIRST INTEREST IN
ROBERT BROWNING

Acknowledgment
of help and inspiration
is hereby made to
Doctor Myra Reynolds, University of Chicago,
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PREFACE

I have tried to rehearse from Robert Browning's poems the stories of those characters who have to an appreciable degree exemplified unselfishness; who have shown devotion to a cause or loyalty to a person or to an altruistic ideal; who have sacrificed personal advantage, prosperity, or temporal success; who have held sincere regard for the welfare of others; or who have manifested a spirit of willing duty to public interests.

Brotherhood I have interpreted not in the sense of any theoretical political or social program but with a practical meaning, — an attitude of helpfulness to others; an active sympathy for fellow beings; a charity for even the sinning and the hopeless. I have included those who have exhibited personal magnanimity, and those in family relationships whose love has shown deeply unselfish aspects and a genuine fidelity to all human claims.

A few detached brotherly sentiments, in no way expressing the attitude of the speaker, have not lent themselves to unified presentation; a few misanthropes, however, have been included, for they have made excellent foils. The transcriptions from the Greek have been omitted.

CHAPTER ONE

BROWNING'S COSMOPOLITANISM

I. *Biographical Sketch*

By racial inheritance as well as by training Robert Browning was a cosmopolite. His great-grandmother was a Creole from the West Indies; his mother was the daughter of a German who had married a Scotch wife. To English, Scotch, German, and Creole blood in his veins, a few students of Browning would add that of Jewish.

His early training was marked by a wide catholicity of interests. His love for animals was evidenced by his care of owls, monkeys, magpies, snakes, and an eagle. When he was but five years of age, his father interested him in history. The boy showed a delight in art and, before the age prescribed by rules, was permitted to visit the picture galleries and see the great works of the leading artists. In music he was precocious and received instruction under excellent masters, becoming himself an organist as well as a sculptor. Later

his knowledge became encyclopaedic, and his mind was further broadened by travel.

Browning's wide range of interest in human nature is seen from his many poems on the various arts. These poems not only reveal his intimate knowledge of music, painting, and sculpture, but also uncover the hidden motives of the artist's soul. The "morally impoverished" heart of Andrea del Sarto, and the rapt, spiritual, transcendent spirit of Abt Vogler are both portrayed.

He makes past civilizations live before us. *Old Pictures in Florence* is a short compendium of the varying aims of art during many centuries. Greek sculpture, early Florentine paintings, the later Italian realists, the music of eighteenth century Venice, and the spirit of the works of the Renaissance are recreated in his poems. He mastered and loved Italian literature. While alert to the events and actors of his own generation, he was also at home in any time and at any place.

In his sympathies he was truly a citizen of the world. He was proud of having been born in the largest city of the world; and not from the deserts of the recluse, but from the broad highway of life where men and women congregate, he drew his inspiration. Life, human life, intense toil, the mo-

ments of severest struggle, — these were his delights. No other English poet, it is believed, ever knew any foreign country so well as Browning knew Italy. No other poet has ever dedicated more of his best work to a land which was not his native land.

His family were Dissenters in religion. His being thus cut off from the public schools and the universities may explain, at least to a degree, his independence, originality, and aggressive spirit.

II. *Attitude toward His Century*

A glance at social, industrial, and political England of the nineteenth century may help to reveal Browning's attitude toward his age.

The century in England was a period of constructive political and social measures. There was woeful need of these reforms, for poverty was broadcast and the laborers of farm and factory were oppressed by long hours and dear food. The Reform Bills, Catholic emancipation, the abolition of the Corn Laws, franchise bills, the democratization of local government, and the establishment of free trade are some of the gains of these years.

Charitable and philanthropic methods were improving and were less pauperizing in their results.

Wiser plans were beginning to be used in the care of the sick, the insane, and the criminal. Better environment received attention in the way of housing reform, sanitation, and the small parks movement. Humanitarian legislation dealt with the reform of the criminal law and prisons, with child and woman labor, and general factory regulation. A beginning was made for wider possibilities of education for the masses.

The Victorian era saw rapid progress made in coöperative movements. Christian Socialism was represented by Charles Kingsley and William Morris. There were the social democratic federation, the socialist league, and the Fabian Society; and Arnold Toynbee was devoting his life and means to the university settlement. Yet the science of the age lacked reverence and love.

British dominion was expanding in India; Burmah and territory in Africa were annexed; self-government was growing in Australia and in Canada.

Since the French Revolution poets and other men of letters had given attention to social problems. Beginning, in English literature, with Crabbe, Cowper, and Hood, and continued by Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley the num-

ber of literary champions of the common people and of the poor rapidly increased. Carlyle's soul was aroused by the gigantic social evils, and his works together with the works of Ruskin, Arnold, Morris, and others helped to the changed conditions by the close of the century.

Thus a remarkable growth in social ideals took place during the last decade of Robert Browning's life. What was the relation of Browning to all this social progress of the century? From *Pauline* in 1833 to *Asolando* in 1892 extended a half century of those stirring years. What was the poet's contribution? ¹

¹ Socialism, from being the watchword of the enthusiastic revolutionary, began to be discussed in every intelligent household and in every debating society. This enormous growth in public sentiment occurred during the session of the Unionist Parliament, 1886-1892. When this Parliament opened there was hardly any socialist literature, and when it closed everybody was reading Bellamy and the "Fabian Essays," and Sir William Harcourt had made his memorable remark: "We are all socialists now."

The gesticulating and bemoaning idealists, the Carlyles and Ruskins, the revolutionary but *laissez faire* prophets, like Morris, who believed in a complete change but not in using any means at hand — gave place to Hardy and John Burns, who sprang into leadership from the ranks of the workingmen themselves, and were later their representatives in Parliament when the Independent Labor Party came into existence. All this had been done by that group of progressive men, long-headed enough to see that the ideal of a better and more beautiful social life could not be gained except by a long and toilsome process of education and action which would consciously follow the principles

III. *Brotherhood and Browning*

The brotherhood of man has been called the real religious dogma of the times.

Ideal brotherhood recognizes in all lands, in all nations, races, and times, the members of its own family. It has accepted the term *neighbor* with all its implications of world-wide fellowship and world-wide need. It confesses to a reverence for man as man, believing that humanity bears marks of the divine. The common good, the common welfare, are its daily concern; and some day it expects to see business, commerce, and all industry completely socialized and humanized. Fra-

of growth discovered by scientists to obtain in all unconscious cosmic and physical development, the very principle which as we have seen, Browning declared should have guided his hero Sordello long before the Fabian socialists came into existence — namely, the principle of evolution.

* * *

To sum up, I think one is justified in concluding that as a sympathizer with the liberal political tendencies of the nineteenth century, Browning is of his age. In his quiescence upon the proletarian movement of the latter part of the nineteenth century he seems to have been left behind by his age. In his insistence upon the worth of the individual to himself and to God he is both of his age and beyond it. As has been said of philosophy, "It cannot give us bread but it can give us God, soul, and immortality," so we may say of Browning, that though he did not raise up his voice in the cry of the proletarian for bread, he insisted upon the truths of God, the soul, and immortality. Chapter IV Social Ideals. — Helen A. Clarke: *Browning and His Century*.

ternity, good-will, coöperation, brotherly fellowships, are its motivating impulses. The rights of others are held sacred, and it has attained to that culture which is able to bear with and understand the foreign. Social solidarity is one tenet of its creed. It manifests a genuine enthusiasm for the uplift of all peoples. It labors that all men everywhere shall have a chance at all the blessings that the best-favored have. To belittle, defraud, or injure another man would be to offer insult to the Creator: for when the fatherhood of God is rejoiced in, by the same token must be accepted the brotherhood of man!

"I am a friend of the unfriended poor," Oscar Triggs asserts that Browning might have said as well as Shelley.² Browning believed, as did Sir Thomas Hughes, that "human society is a body consisting of many members, not a warring collection of atoms." While in Tennyson's works there can be detected a consciousness of classes, of social strata, and rank, I believe that our study of Browning will show that to him there was neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, male nor female. By his broad training, by his close contact with other peoples than English, by his broad sym-

² Triggs, Oscar, *Browning and Whitman: A Study in Democracy*.

pathies, by his intense study of the human soul, by his dramatic power of letting his varied and vast list of characters set forth each his individual opinions, by his emphasis upon the principle of love, and by his profound acceptance of the fatherhood of the Christian God of love, he was most adequately prepared to give to the world a body of works that present concretely the sanest and most wholesome ideas of brotherhood of his own and later generations.

Browning has also, I believe, that rare and forward-looking possession, the international mind, — defined by Nicholas Murray Butler as that habit of thinking and acting in foreign relations on the basis that the civilized nations of the world are friendly and coöperating equals.

IV. *Treatment of Love*

The term *love* as used in scores of instances in Browning is the equivalent of *brotherhood*. The word to Browning did not designate a weak, sentimental, selfish emotion, but was charged with virile, altruistic force.

To him there never could be "too much love." He has the Queen in *In the Balcony* say:

"There is no good of life but love;" and the

Duchess learns from the Gypsy that "love is the only good in the world." "Love gains God at first leap;" and the woman in *Dis Aliter Visum* wonders whether the man who should have been her wedded lover ever realized:

. . . what's the earth
With all its art, verse, music, worth —
Compared with love, found, gained, and kept?

This devoted love between man and woman is a symbol of that love which should obtain in the entire world family. Poem after poem presents under different imagery the principle that the affections transcend the intellect: the highest knowledge comes through love. Such love as this, W. Dewitt Hyde in *The Art of Optimism* calls Browning's "final solution of life's problem." "Man's good is found," he continues, "in the active exercise of all his powers for a worthy end; and since no end is worthy of his efforts which is lower than himself, or less than personal, therefore devotion to persons, divine or human, good or bad, — in other words, love, — is God's secret of a happy life."

In *Browning's Treatment of the Principle of Love*, chapter VI in *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher* by Henry Jones, the author

emphatically concludes that the basic assumption of Browning is that NO MAN CAN BE ABSOLUTELY SELFISH AND BE MAN. Mr. Jones's studies in Browning have caused him to interpret Browning thus:

"But in one thing Browning stands alone. He has given to love a moral significance, a place and power amongst those substantial elements on which rest the dignity of man's being and the greatness of his destiny, in a way which is, I believe, without example in any other poet. And he has done this by means of that moral and religious earnestness which pervades all his poetry. The one object of supreme interest to him is the development of the soul, and his penetrative insight revealed to him the power to love as the paramount fact in that development. To love, he repeatedly tells us, is the sole and supreme object of man's life; it is the one lesson which he has to learn on earth; and, love once learnt, in what way matters little, 'it leaves completion in the soul.' Love we dare not, and, indeed, cannot absolutely miss. No man can be absolutely selfish and be a man. . . . Love, in a word, is the highest good: and, as such, it has all its worth in itself, and gives to all other things what worth they have. God himself gains the

'ineffable crown' by showing love and saving the weak. Love is the power divine, the central energy of God's being. . . . He who has learned to love in any way has 'caught God's secret.' . . . True love is always an infinite giving. . . . It is a streaming outwards of the inmost treasures of the spirit, a consecration of its best activities to the welfare of others. . . . Love spends itself for another, and seeks satisfaction only in another's good. . . . This doctrine of love is, in my opinion, the richest vein of pure ore in Browning's poetry."

V. *Different Nationalities*

Browning mastered to a marked degree the setting and local color for his places, epochs, and characters. More truly than did Shakespeare, Browning entered into the intricate social and institutional life that aided in producing his characters.³ The following representatives of different nations may serve to suggest the wide range of peoples from which he drew his poems:

³ We have in *The Return of the Druses* his love of the corners of history, his interest in the religious mind of the East, with its almost terrifying sense of being in the hand of heaven, his love of colour and verbal luxury, of gold and green and purple, which made some think he must be an Oriental himself.—Gilbert K. Chesterton: *Robert Browning*.

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- English: in *Strafford*, *Cavalier Tunes*, *Clive* (England in India).
- French: *Herve Riel*, *Count Gismond*, *The Two Poets of Croisic*.
- German: *Paracelsus*, *Abt Vogler*.
- Greek: *Balaustian's Adventure*, *Aristophanes' Apology*, *Pheidippides*, *Echetlos*.
- Italian: *Sordello*, *Fra Lippo Lippi*, *Pictor Ignotus*, *The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Praxed's Church*, *My Last Duchess*, *The Ring and the Book*, *A Grammarian's Funeral*, *Up at a Villa—Down in the City*, *In a Gondola*.
- Jewish: *Saul*, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, *Holy Cross Day*, *Filippo Baldinucci on the Privilege of Burial*, *Solomon and Balkis*, *Jochanan Hakkadosh*.
- Levantine: *The Return of the Druses*.
- Persian: *Ferishtah's Fancies*.
- Russian: *Ivan Ivanovich*.
- Spanish: *A Forgiveness*.
- Swedish: *Cristina and Monaldeschi*.

VI. Range of Characters

A deep vein of brotherhood is shown in Browning's versatile choice of characters.⁴⁻⁵ It was a

⁴ The sea which spoke to Browning with most expressive utterances was always the sea of humanity.—Edward Dowden: *The Life of Robert Browning*.

⁵ All kinds of men and women, in every station of life, and at every stage of evil and goodness crowd his pages.—Henry Jones: *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*.

regal breadth of sympathy that enabled him to comprehend the inner life and motives of kings, queens, counts, dukes, and duchesses; popes, bishops, priests, and monks; patriots, politicians, soldiers, poets, grammarians, sculptors, painters, musicians, and mystics; Jews, Moors, religious fanatics, and a dying Christian; lovers, lawyers, students, silk-weavers, Gypsies, outcasts, suicides, impostors, and all misunderstood men.⁶⁻⁷

⁶ We hear little in Browning of Alexander, and Caesar, and Napoleon. But we do hear from him a great deal of those characters whom the world had learned to ridicule and despise. The world was pleased to call such souls as these failures. To these human derelicts Browning drew near, touched them with his mighty compassion, fired them with his brilliant hope, cleared their obscured vision, held them up to themselves, and showed them through the darkness the rising of the day-star of a new life. The derelict still had a value to him. — Austin Foster: *The Message of Robert Browning*.

⁷ Unlike Shakespeare, who is not concerned with making Julius Caesar a Roman or Duke Theseus a Greek, Browning brings to the creation of each of these widely divergent characters, a detailed knowledge of the special habits of life and thought of the nation or race concerned. He represents also many kinds of human interest. We find in his poems seekers after knowledge such as Paracelsus, who takes all thought and fact as his domain; or such as the Grammarian, who found Greek particles too wide a realm; or such as the pedant Sibrandus Schafnaburgensis, whose learned rubbish cumbered the land. There are likewise those who grope after the truths of religion from Caliban on his island to the learned physician Karshish and the highly cultured Cleon; those who have the full vision from John to Rabbi Ben Ezra; those who juggle with terms and creeds as does Bishop Blougram; and out and out frauds like Sludge the Medium. The church is represented by many men dissimilar in endowments,

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From the artless Pippa or the queenly Colombe to the plotting Domizia; from the genuine-hearted Valence to the arrogantly cruel Duke; from val-
tastes, spiritual experiences, and aims. There are Italian prelates of every sort, from the worldly-minded Bishop of St. Praxed's, occupied in death with vain thoughts of lapis-lazuli and pure Latin, to the "soldier-saint," Caponsacchi, who saved Pompilia, and the wise old Pope who pronounced Guido's doom; from the unworthy priest of the Spanish Cloister to the very human, kindly Pope in *The Bean Feast*. And from all these it is far down the ages to the evangelical parish priest of *The Inn Album*, that "purblind honest drudge," who, the deeper to impress his flock, painted heaven dimly but "made hell distinct." There are many artists, many musicians. There are poets from Aprile in *Paracelsus*, and the troubadours Eglamour and Sordello, to Keats and Shelley. The extremes of social life are given. There are the street girls in *Pippa Passes* and there are kings and queens in royal retinues. There are statesmen, and warriors, and seekers after romantic adventure. There are haughty aristocrats of cold and cruel natures, and there are obscure but high-hearted doers of heroic deeds. Browning's dictum, "Study man, man, whatever the issue," led him into a world wider than that known by any other poet of his time and akin, as has been pointed out, to that of the great writers of fiction. As an observer of human life he was not unlike his poor poet of Valladolid who, with his "scrutinizing hat," went about the streets, absorbed in watching all kinds of people, all sorts of occupations, "scenting the world, looking it full in the face." He chose to set forth "the wants and ways" of actual life. He summed up his work in the *Epilogue to Pacchiarotto*:

Man's thoughts and loves and hates!
Earth is my vineyard, these grow there:
From grape of the ground, I made or marred
My vintage.

It is further apparent that Browning's characters are never merely types, but must always be reckoned with as individuals. It was his belief that no two beings were ever made similar in head and heart; hence, even where there are external similarities, the essential ele-

iant Count Gismond to the temporizing Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau; from ingenuous, noble Luria to Djabal, the calculating user of tricks;

ments are strongly differentiated. Take, for instance, three poems in which the situations are not unlike. In *My Last Duchess*, *The Flight of the Duchess*, and *The Ring and the Book* we have a portrayal of three men of high lineage, but cold, egotistic, cruel, who have married very young and lovely women over whom the custom of the times gives them absolute power. But there the likeness ends. We cannot for a moment class together the polished, aesthetic, well-bred aristocrat of the first poem, the absurd little popinjay of the second, and the "tiger-cat" of the third. Less strongly, but as clearly are the wives differentiated. To the innocent gaiety of heart, the bright, sweet friendliness of the hapless lady in *My Last Duchess* must be added for the lady in *The Flight of the Duchess*, a native force of character which, when roused by the call of the gypsy-queen, enables her to break the yoke imposed on her by the Duke and his mother and go forth into a life of adventure, freedom, and love. The delicate, flower-like Pompilia in *The Ring and the Book* has also power to initiate and carry through a plan of escape, but her incentive is no call to romantic freedom. Her passive endurance changes to active revolt only when motive and energy are supplied by her love for her child. Or take Pippa and Phene in *Pippa Passes*, two beautiful young girls brought up in dangerous and evil surroundings, but both innately pure. In character and experience they are, however, as unlike as two girls could be. Phene, undeveloped in mind and heart, the easily duped agent of a cruel trick, appeals to us by her slow, incredulous, but eager response to goodness and aspiration, the tremulous opening of her soul to love. But Pippa, with her observant love of nature, her gay, sportive, winsome fancies, her imaginative sympathy with the lives of others, her knowledge of good and evil, her poise, her bright steadiness of soul, carries us into a different and much more highly evolved world of thought and feeling. So we might go through the great assemblage of Browning's characters to find that each one stands out by himself as a person with his own qualities, possibilities, and problems.—Myra Reynolds: *Robert Browning* (Selected Poems).

from the life-struggles yet victories of the hero of *Pauline*, of Paracelsus, and Sordello to the "good-Lord-good-Devil" Ogniben, Blougram, or Sludge; from the self-abnegating purity of a Caponsacchi to the towering crimes of a Guido — what a limitless expanse of imaginative fellowships! What a world fraternity! Truly is Browning a diviner of the secrets of men; one who appreciates, evaluates, yet sympathizes with all mankind, a brother in the human family on earth.⁸

VII. *Is Browning's Poetry Browning?*

In this search for the deeds of brotherhood expressed in Browning's poems, I have not ventured to affirm that what I have found is Browning's own personal opinion. However much my own convictions seem to equate the words and the

⁸ In the characters of Fra Lippo Lippi, Bishop Blougram, Sludge, Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, and the hero of *Fifine at the Fair*, Browning undertook the defense of the indefensible. He wished to show that an impostor might be generous, and that a liar might be high-minded. Charity was his basic philosophy; but it was, as it were, a fierce charity, a charity that went man-hunting. He was a kind of cosmic detective who walked into the foulest of thieves' kitchens and accused men publicly of virtue. The character of Djabal in *The Return of the Druses* is the first of this long series of forlorn hopes. . . . As we shall see, even realizing the humanity of a noble impostor like Djabal did not content his erratic hunger for good men. He went further again, and realized the humanity of a mean impostor like Sludge. — Gilbert K. Chesterton: *Robert Browning*.

author, I hereby refuse to be included within the scope of the author's warning, as expressed in *At the Mermaid*. In this poem it is maintained that a poet's dramatic presentation of a hero's ideas is not intended to "leave ajar" his own "bosom's gate." —

Here's my work: does work discover —

What was rest from work — my life?

Did I live man's hater, lover?

Leave the world at peace, at strife?

Call earth ugliness or beauty?

See things there in large or small?

Use to pay its Lord my duty?

Use to own a lord at all?

* * *

Which of you did I enable

Once to slip inside my breast;

There to catalogue and label

What I like least, what love best,

Hope and fear, believe and doubt of,

Seek and shun, respect — deride?

Who has right to make a rout of

Rarities he found inside?

Should it ever appear, however, that I have had Browning in mind when I should have had only his characters, I will take my position behind Berdoo's comments on this same poem:

"Notwithstanding this emphatic declaration

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(that he leaves his inquisitive visitors outside) it is probable that few great poets have opened their hearts to the world more completely than Mr. Browning: it is as easy to construct his personality from his works as it is to reconstruct an old Greek temple from the sculptured stones which are scattered on its site. All Mr. Browning's characters talk with the Browning tongue, and are as little given to barring their portals as he to closing the door of his breast. . . Having declared himself as determined to let the public have no glimpse inside his breast, in stanza ten he proceeds to admit us to his innermost soul, in its joy of life and its golden optimism. It is as perfect a picture of the poet's healthy mind as he could possibly have given us." ⁹

The tenth stanza, referred to, is as follows:

Have you found your life distasteful?
My life did, and does, smack sweet.
Was your youth of pleasure wasteful?
Mine I saved and hold complete.
Do your joys with age diminish?
When mine fail me, I'll complain.
Must in death your daylight finish?
My sun sets to rise again.

The same idea, that the poet does not reveal his

⁹ Berdöe, Edward: *The Browning Cyclopaedia*.

own life, is expressed again in *House*, which closes with the thought that if Shakespeare in his sonnets spread open to the public gaze his inner life, "the less Shakespeare he."

CHAPTER TWO

PAULINE

Pauline, the first of Robert Browning's published works, was printed anonymously in 1833, when the poet was but twenty years old. The author says of it: "The thing was my earliest attempt at 'poetry,' always dramatic in principle, and so many utterances of so many imaginary persons, not mine." The poem, written in a heat — "on one leg" as Browning himself expressed it, was considered by him a crude and preliminary sketch; yet it is valuable because it is considered really to reveal a stage in the poet's own mental life and includes several of the dominant ideas which appear again and again in the poems of maturer years.

For our purpose the main interest is that in this earliest work we have the study of a self-centered character. This fragment of a confession is made by the unnamed hero to Pauline, a young woman whom he later loves. He bewails again and again his selfishness. He loves nothing. Reason has quelled his love:

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My love would pass my reason — but since here
Love must receive its object from this earth,
While reason will be chainless, the few truths
Caught from its wanderings have sufficed to quell
All love below.

But he turns to the songs of a mighty singer of earth, and in a resulting new life he vows himself to liberty. He forms an altruistic purpose:

“Men were to be as gods, and earth as heaven.”

He would effect this. He becomes interested in others:

. . . to look upon
Men, and their cares, and hopes, and fears, and joys.

But faith in man vanished:

First went my hopes of perfecting mankind,
And faith in them — then freedom in itself,
And virtue in itself — and then my motive's ends,
And powers and loves; and human love went last.

He then met Pauline, knew that she loved him, but found not love and faith in his own heart. But his restlessness and hunger drove him on to God — “that loveth us,” and as he recognizes Divine love he exclaims to Pauline:

I am thine forever.

The hero's confession is the story of degradation as he sank “into the dim orb of self,” but finally

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his "redemption and restoration by Divine love, mediated to him by human love." He has learned that love is greater than knowledge. Too late his changed life was for service in this world, yet he says:

No less I make an end in perfect joy,
And in some future place —
. . . unknown secrets will be trusted me
Which were denied the waverer once.

The closing section contains the famous apostrophe and tribute to the poet Shelley, and in it the Browning student is thrilled with the positive affirmation that love — with all the vast content which the author crowds into this term — is a part of the lifelong creed of the great poet:

Sun-treader, I believe in God and truth
And love.

PARACELSUS

Paracelsus — one of Browning's truly great poems — presents a hero as a self-centered searcher for knowledge. Paracelsus believes that in his search he is obeying the command of God for his life. He believes that God intends "to work man's welfare" by his weak endeavor:

My ready answer to the will of God
Who summons me to be his organ.

His aspirations will lead him into the path of extreme hardship, but he has counted the cost. A voice from without has asked :

Wilt thou adventure for my sake and man's
Apart from all reward?

But with his professed desire to seek hidden truth for the benefit of mankind, he is proud and self-willed. He longs to trample on the "slow crowd":

I seemed to long
At once to trample on, yet save mankind,
To make some unexampled sacrifice
In their behalf, to wring some wondrous good
From heaven or earth for them, to perish, winning
Eternal weal in the act.

With a feeling of superiority, isolation, and aloofness, he says:

If I can serve mankind
'Tis well; but there our intercourse must end:
I never will be served by those I serve.¹⁰

"He haughtily," says Walker, "cuts himself off from his fellows, and sets out to accomplish single-

¹⁰ Although he sets before himself the service of man as the outcome of all his labors . . . at the same time he detaches himself from his fellow-men, regards them from a regal height, would decline even their tribute of gratitude, and would be the lofty benefactor rather than the loving helpmate of his brethren.—Edward Dowden: *The Life of Robert Browning*.

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handed what ought to be the achievement of humanity.”

Festus warns him of this spirit:

How can that course be safe which from the first
Produces carelessness to human love?

And again:

But do not cut yourself from human weal!
You cannot thrive — a man that dares affect
To spend his life in service to his kind
For no reward of theirs, unbound to them
By any tie.

. . . there would be
A monstrous spectacle upon the earth,
— A being not knowing what love is.

Before Paracelsus leaves on his quest, he uses some words that suggest that worth may be found in unexpected places and evidences a desire for the betterment of the race:

May not the truth be lodged alike in all,
The lowest as the highest?

. . . set free the soul alike in all,

. . . Make no more giants, God,
But elevate the race at once.

In Part II Paracelsus has sought the home of the Greek conjuror at Constantinople to learn by magic what he has failed to learn so far in his laborious

searching. His request is answered by his meeting Aprile, who has come on a similar errand, seeking for light. Paracelsus hears a voice from within which causes him to think of

. . . all poets, God ever meant
Should save the world.

These poets sing:

Must one more recreant to his race
Die with unexerted powers,
And join us, leaving as he found
The world, he was to loosen, bound?

At this juncture the poet Aprile enters, and they exchange greetings by saying:

(Par.) I am he that aspired to KNOW: and thou?

(Aprile) I would LOVE infinitely, and be loved.

Aprile would speak for

. . . men, men everywhere.
. . . no thought which ever stirred
A human breast should be untold.
. . . for common life, its wants
And ways, would I set forth in beauteous hues:
The lowest hind should not possess a hope,
A fear, but I'd be by him, saying better
Than he his own heart's language.

Paracelsus is deeply affected by the words of Aprile, and awakes to the one-sidedness of his past

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search, and feels that the truth has reached him. He sees the error into which both have fallen. He has excluded love; the poet has excluded knowledge:

Are we not halves of one dissevered world?

Paracelsus pleads:

Love me henceforth, Aprile, while I learn
To love; and, merciful God, forgive us both!
We wake at length from weary dreams; but both
Have slept in fairy-land: though dark and drear
Appears the world before us, we no less
Wake with our wrists and ankles jeweled still.
I too have sought to KNOW as thou to LOVE —
Excluding love as thou refusedst knowledge.
Still thou hast beauty and I, power. We wake:
What penance canst thou devise for both of us?

Are we not halves of one dissevered world?

And this dramatic scene closes with Paracelsus saying:

. . . Let me love, too!

I have attained, and now I may depart.

In Part III Paracelsus is at Basil, and is telling to Festus the story of his attempt at serving man:

. . . a man

Who . . . summoned me

To serve my race at once.

And give my gains, imperfect as they were,
To men.

. . . how I essayed
To live like that mad poet, for a while,

* * *

And love alone!

He is now a famous and popular professor, but he confides to Festus that he is miserable at heart. He aspired to know God: he has attained — but this professorship. The pupils who frequent his classrooms are dull. He holds in contempt all former workers in the same field of knowledge.

Yet he betrays some heart gain when he says:

Whatever be my chance or mischance,
Whatever benefits mankind must glad me too.
And men seem made, though not as I believed,
For something better than the times produce.

Soon he makes the great confession:

Love, hope, fear, faith — these make humanity;

* * *

And these I have lost!

Part IV shows Paracelsus cast off by those he "sought to benefit." Festus plainly probes to the seat of the trouble, and charges Paracelsus with self-delusion and selfishness in his work for humanity.

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In Part V Festus has come to the hospital cell to the bedside of the dying Paracelsus, who in delirium wildly raves through the events of his past life, asking him whether Aprile

KNOWS as he LOVES — if I shall LOVE and KNOW.

He shrieks as he seems to see “sweet human love” leave him.

See, Aprile,

Men will not heed.

* * *

I will exterminate the race!

But he sees that in death

We shall all be equal at the last.

* * *

. . . lay me thus; then say, “He lived
Too much advanced before his brother men;
They kept him still in front. ’Twas for their good
But yet a dangerous station. It were strange
That he should tell God he had never ranked
With men: so, here at least he is man.”

He still believes in his divine mission:

A shrine, for here God speaks to men through me.

Moments of clearer vision come, and he speaks as a teacher. He rehearses the plan of God in the evolution of the world, and shows that love mingles with and crowns the vast work of creation. He gives utterance to a high ideal for the social whole:

When all mankind alike is perfected,
 Equal in full-blown powers — then, not till then,
 I say, begins man's general infancy.

He sees his past errors, but protests :

I never fashioned out a fancied good
 Distinct from man's.

Rehearsing the story of his development, of his discovery that love is an integral part of human existence, of his entrance into a sympathetic, socialized life, he says :

I saw Aprile. . .

I learned my own deep error : love's undoing
 Taught me the worth of love in man's estate,
 And what proportion love should hold with power
 In his right constitution ; love preceding
 Power, and with much power, always much more love ;
 Love still straitened in his present means,
 And earnest for new power to set love free.
 I learned this, and supposed the whole were learned :
 And thus, when men received with stupid wonder
 My first revealings, would have worshipped me,
 And I despised and loathed their proffered praise —
 When, with awakened eyes, they took revenge
 For past credulity in casting shame
 On my real knowledge, and I hated them —
 It was not strange I saw no good in man,
 To overbalance all the wear and waste
 Of faculties, displayed in vain, but born

To prosper in some better sphere: and why?
 In my own heart love had not been made wise
 To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,
 To know even hate is but a mask of love's,
 To see a good in evil, and a hope
 In ill-success; to sympathize, be proud
 Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim
 Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,
 Their prejudice and fears and cares and doubts;
 All with a touch of nobleness, despite
 Their error, upward tending all though weak,
 Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,
 But dream of him, and guess where he may be,
 And do their best to climb and get to him.
 All this I knew not and I failed.

* * *

But after, they will know me. If I stoop
 Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
 It is but for a time; . . .

. . . I shall emerge one day.

I have tried to let Paracelsus tell in his own words the development of his soul, as it freed itself from the trammels of egoism to ascend the plane of a lover of mankind. I have interpreted the word *love* as nearly all the commentators on the poem do: taking it simply in its usually accepted meaning. There is one dissenting voice, however, from this view; and I give in a footnote this presenta-

tion of Josiah Royce's.¹¹ His interpretation, however, still retains the idea of sympathy and coöperation with other men.

¹¹ *The Problem of Paracelsus*. The "Lover" and the "Knower" of the poet are the Artist and the Occultist. The doctrine that Aprile teaches is, first, that God is love, and, secondly, that the meaning of this doctrine is simply that God is the "perfect poet, who acts his own creations." . . . What it asserts is this: If you want to know God, live rather than peer about you; be observant of the moral rather than of the physical world; . . . watch men rather than things; consider the secrets of the heart rather than the hopelessly mysterious symbolism of nature; be fond of the commonplace, so long as it is the commonplace in human life, rather than the most startling miracles of the physical world; discover new lands in men's hearts, and let the deserts and the sea-caves alone; call nothing work that is not done in company with your fellow-men, and nothing true insight that does not mean work thus shoulder to shoulder with your comrades. All this, in substance, Aprile teaches; and this, and nothing else, is what he and Browning mean by "Love."

Paracelsus the occultist aspires, bids farewell to his friends, and then sets out on his great quest. Years later we find him, older, but hardly wiser, at the house of the Greek conjuror in Constantinople, where he seeks magic enlightenment as to his future. The reply to his request comes in the shape of the sudden meeting with that mysterious figure, the dying Aprile, who has come to this place upon a similar errand after a life of failure. The two men meet, and, in the wondrous scene which follows, Paracelsus learns and, as far as his poor occult wit comprehends it, accepts the ideal of the poet, who "would love infinitely and be loved." The characters here brought into tragic conflict, the "lover" and the "knower," are the Artist and the Occultist. Both are enthusiasts, both have sought God, both have longed to find out how to benefit mankind. There is no clash of reason with sentiment. On the contrary, neither of these men is in the least capable of ever becoming a reasoner; both are dreamers; both have failed in what they set out to do. There is no contrast of

Frothingham's interpretation is representative of those of a host of other critics: "To serve men by winning knowledge is his ambition: 'to serve 'love' as Christian charity or practical humanitarianism, with 'knowledge' as something more purely contemplative. Aprile is no reformer. He longed to do good, but as an artist; he longed to create, but as a maker of the beautiful. His ideal attitude is, in a way, quite as contemplative as is that of Paracelsus. This "knower" is a physician. This artist, with his creative ideals, longs to "love" by apprehending the works of God as shown forth in the passions of man.

* * *

Accepting this counsel, but very dimly apprehending the meaning of the artist's ideal of "love"—the occultist now resolves to show his love for mankind in more immediate practical relations with them. The result is the abortive life in the professorship in Basel. . . The inevitable downfall comes, and Paracelsus is driven from Basel.

* * *

An occultist must finish his days magically. From weary dreams and furious delirium the dying seer miraculously arises, full of seeming vigour and of cool insight, to tell his friends what knowledge he has attained at this supreme moment. Now at last do we indeed learn the truth. . . Paracelsus has not "arrived" at what he sought, an earthly mission; but he now sees why he has failed. The old mystical monism was right; but as the seer depicts it before us, a new spirit has come into it. The story of the world is right as of old; but the artist alone had put the true interpretation upon it. Could the Paracelsus of former days but have understood in his time what love meant, could he but have known how all the waves and eddies of human passion, even when they seem farthest from the divine, reveal God as no object in outer nature, however wonderful, can ever do—the occultist would not have aspired in vain! He would have been transformed, as the man of the future shall be, into the artist. This is the final message of Paracelsus and the meaning of the whole tale. — Josiah Royce in *Boston Browning Society Papers*.

man,' but apart, in a temper of proud isolation and conscious greatness. . . . He failed because of his pride of power and knowledge. He then learned the place and power of love in man's life, and sought to serve men, — but still apart from them, and without sympathy, without self-denial. Driven again to despair by his failure at Basel, he then came to see that he had a further and harder lesson to learn — a lesson without which such work as his could never be done: love in his heart had to be wise and pure to discern the dim beginnings of light in the minds and love in the hearts of other men."

SORDELLO

As in *Pauline* and *Paracelsus*, so the hero of *Sordello* progresses away from a self-centered life, and wins the inner struggle, just as he dies, to be true to the People's cause.

Briefly, Sordello as page in his "drowsy Paradise" led the life of a poet child. In his ideals he reaches out into life, and he desires to wed Palma. Later, at Mantua, he surpasses the troubadour Eglamour, thus unexpectedly winning the prize from Palma's hands at her Court of Love. Thus Sordello became master poet. He chose "song,

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not deeds." But as a poet, life to him was a failure. He became degraded:

Weeks, months, years went by,
And lo, Sordello vanished utterly,
Sundered twain; each spectral part at strife
With each; one jarred against another life;
The Poet thwarting hopelessly the Man.

But he had the will to do something yet. The opportunity soon came. Sordello and Palma met at Ferrara, the unhappy city contested for by both Ghibellines and Guelfs. He there saw mankind; but he was somewhat disappointed. They were not just as he had imagined them. But a profound sympathy for them seized him. He discovered that the Guelf faction was the cause of the people, and he espoused that cause.

This phalanx, as of myriad points combined,
Whereby he still had imagined the mankind
His youth had passed in dreams of rivalling,
His age — in plans to prove at least such things
Had been so dreamed, — which now he must impress
With his own will, effect a happiness
By theirs, — supply a body to his soul
Thence, and become eventually whole
With them as he had hoped to be without.

* * *

Crowd upon crowd rose on Sordello thus

And the new body, ere he could suspect,
Cohered, mankind and he were fully fused.

He would work swift reforms:

. . . First a mighty equilibrium, sure,
Should he establish, privilege procure
For all, the few had long possessed.

He realized his blindness in the past; but now
he would build up Rome again, — a Rome that
should mean the rights of mankind:

This morn, a recreant to my race — mankind
O'erlooked till now. . . .

Let us have Rome again! . . .

. . . On me it lights
To build up Rome again.

He pleads, in vain, with Taurello to take up the
Guelf cause, and aid the cause of the Pope and the
people. But in the morning the vision of Rome
had vanished, "arch by arch." It would take cen-
turies to accomplish anything. Society grows
slowly:

God has conceded two sights to man —
One, of men's whole work, time's completed plan,
The other, of the minute's work, man's first
Step to the plan's completeness.

There is need, too, of opportunism in the present.

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Then, too, will he really be benefiting the people? —

Why should sympathy command you quit
The course that makes your joy, nor will remit
Their woe?

Do they not need the hard experiences of life for
their own souls' good? —

. . . for mankind springs
Salvation by each hindrance interposed. . .

Then came the great temptation and crisis of his life. Taurello unexpectedly casts the badge upon Sordello's neck, thus making him chief of the Ghibellines, the emperor's cause, and the bloody enemy of the Guelfs. Palma can be his bride. Here was the opportunity to satisfy both his love and his ambition. He was dazzled by the splendor of the prospect. But how about the cause of the People? Duty? Humanity? Indulging in specious sophistries, the battle royal sets in within his soul:

Here is the crowd, whom I with freest heart
Offer to serve, contented for my part
To give up life in service — only grant
That I do serve; if otherwise, why want
Aught further of me?

Death ends the struggle, and as Taurello and

Palma press over the threshold, the badge is —
beneath his feet!

In *Sordello*, we thus see that aspect of brotherhood which takes the form of a leader looking forward to carrying out a scheme of social reform; yet conservative arguments are arrayed against the hope of any speedy bettering of the condition of the people; and the hero dies before he accomplishes anything.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DRAMAS

Strafford

In the early tragedy, *Strafford*, published 1837, Strafford, feverish in his loyalty to the "king by divine right," Charles I — a fatuous devotion to an unworthy monarch — shows some elements of self-renunciation. His life is sacrificed as a result of this almost insane affection, the king himself signing the death-warrant. Strafford says:

God put it in my mind to love, serve, die,
For Charles.

Pippa Passes

Pippa Passes, a succession of dramatic scenes, is a masterly portrayal not only of the mutual interdependence of humanity, the inveterate interlinking of the rich and poor, of the good and evil, but also of the limitless influence for good which even one obscure and unknown person may unconsciously exert. The little silk-winder at every step of a day's existence, leaves traces of help and uplift, —

the natural overflowings from a pure soul right with God and with his creatures.

Pippa, one of the girls employed in the silk-mills of Asola, awakes on New Year's morning, — her one holiday of the long year. How can she have the most happiness this one day? She decides to fancy herself to be those persons who she thinks have the most of love in their lives. She starts wandering through the streets as the haughty Ottima, the lady of the great villa up the hillside. Just as she passes the villa, her joyous song of "God's in his heaven" strikes terror to Ottima's paramour, the murderer of Ottima's aged and despised husband. The song awakens them both to their crime and lifts them from their hideous fascination. Ottima, forgetful of self, importunes Heaven:

Not me — to him, O God, be merciful!

In this cry of self-effacement, we see Ottima's redemption. Both have been saved from spiritual death by the song of the girl.

Pippa next imagines herself to be the happy bride Phene, who is to-day to be married to the student Jules. Naught does Pippa know of the cruel joke of the fellow students, who have duped Jules into marrying a crude artist's model, a young

woman not at all his equal. When the hideous joke is faced, and Jules would send Phene away, Pippa's glad song works reconciliation, and love is born.

But mother-love will endure longer than the loves she has been feigning! She will pass by Luigi and his fond mother. And as Pippa passes and sings of the good king, Luigi is nerved again to undertake his self-appointed patriotic, though mistaken, task of murdering the Austrian emperor, as the way to bring freedom to Italy.¹²

Once more the song of Pippa battles for the right. Above mother-love is God's love, and the beloved of God, Monsignor, fills Pippa's ideal of happiness. But, climax of life's ironies, Monsignor seems at this moment to have been tempted for an instant's time to permit the ruin of Pippa. But her song is the shaft that pierces the manhood of Monsignor, and he is aroused to immediate duty.

Tired with the day's "fooling," Pippa, wholly unconscious of the far-reaching consequences of the day, and preparing for her night's rest, muses:

Now, one thing I should like to really know:
How near I ever might approach all these
I only fancied being, this long day:

¹² This "divine folly" of Luigi's is another instance of a self-transcending passion, but we cannot call it a display of brotherhood.

— Approach, I mean, so as to touch them, so
 As to . . . in some way . . . move them — if you
 please,

Do good or evil to them some slight way.

For instance, if I wind

Silk to-morrow, my silk may bind

And border Ottima's cloak's hem.

Ah me, and my important part with them,

This morning's hymn half promised when I rose!

True in some sense or other, I suppose.

God bless me! I can pray no more to-night.

No doubt, some way or other, hymns say right.

All service ranks the same with God —

With God, whose puppets, best and worst,

Are we; there is no last nor first.

Her service to God and to her fellow men is this one day of innocent gladness. "Her own service," Dowden says, "though she knows it not, is more than a twelve-hour's gladness; she, the little silk-winder, rays forth the influences of a heart that has the potency ascribed to gems of unflawed purity; and such influences — here embodied in the symbol of a song — are among the precious realities of our life."¹³

¹³ In 1841 *Pippa Passes* appeared, and with it the real Browning of the modern world. *Pippa Passes* is the greatest poem ever written, with the exception of one or two by Walt Whitman, to express the sentiment of the pure love of humanity. . . . He has written of himself that he had long thought vaguely of a being passing through the world, obscure and unnameable, but moulding the destinies of others

King Victor and King Charles

King Charles, in this tragedy of Italian history, is placed in the tragic struggle of conflicting duties: loyalty to his subjects or apparent kindness to his aged father. He had left his preferred quiet life to accept the crown at the request of his father, King Victor. He has gained the affection of his people and has their welfare at heart:

The people is now part of me.

* * *

We did the people right.

* * *

It would seem that all my people love me.

Charles knows that Victor has not the best interest of the people at heart:

Oh, my own people, whom will you find there,

To ask of, to consult with, to care for,

to mightier and better issues. Then his almost faultless instinct came in and suggested that this being, whom he dramatized as the work-girl, Pippa, should be even unconscious of anything but her own happiness and should sway men's lives with a lonely mirth. It was a bold and moving conception to show us these mature and tragic human groups all at the supreme moment eavesdropping upon the solitude of a child. And it was an even more precise instinct which made Browning make the errant benefactor a woman. A man's good work is effected by what he does, a woman's by what she is.

Pippa Passes . . . with its beautiful deification of unconscious influence. In *Pauline* and the poems that follow it, Browning has only the comparatively easy task of giving an account of himself. In *Pippa Passes* he has the only less easy task of giving an account of humanity. — Gilbert K. Chesterton: *Robert Browning*.

To hold up with your hands? Whom? One that's false —
False — from the head's crown to the foot's sole, false!

Shall he yield to the unwise demand of this aged man and restore to him the rule? King Charles's chief officers and his wife advise that, even though he be misunderstood, he be true to the best interests of his realm, and this policy is the one he adheres to.

The steadfast wife, Polyxena, urges the king:

King Charles, pause here upon this strip of time
Allotted you out of eternity!
Crowns are from God: you in his name hold yours.
Your life's no least thing, were it fit your life
Should be abjured along with rule; but now,
Keep both! Your duty is to live and rule —

* * *

. . . While, as 'tis, no doubt,
Something of stain will ever rest on you;
No one will rightly know why you refused
To abdicate; they'll talk of deeds you could
Have done, no doubt, — nor do I much expect
Future achievement will blot out the past,
Envelope it in haze — nor shall we two
Live happy any more. 'Twill be, I feel,
Only in moments that the duty's seen
As palpably as now: the months, the years
Of painful indistinctness are to come,
While daily must we tread these palace-rooms
Pregnant with memories of the past: your eye

May turn to mine and find no comfort there,
 Through fancies that beset me, as yourself,
 Of other courses, with far other issues,
 We might have taken this great night: such bear,
 As I will bear! What matters happiness?
 Duty! There's man's one moment: this is yours!

The Return of the Druses

It is doubtful whether Djabal, in *The Return of the Druses*, belongs in the list of unselfish heroes. His is a very complex and subtle character. He has felt an inner call to be the liberator of his people, but motives of family revenge mingle with his lofty patriotism. Yet he has let "each joy 'scape for the Druses' sake." More selfishness however enters when, in order to win Anael, he claims to be another divine incarnation and declares himself Hakeem. —

. . . Till that woman crossed my path,
 On went I, solely for my people's sake:
 I saw her, and I first saw too myself,
 And slackened pace: "If I should prove indeed
 Hakeem — with Anael by!"

His imposture is so successful that whenever his truer nature triumphs and he would confess his deception, the enthusiasm he has enkindled in the Druses carries him forward in his claims. For

their cause he concludes to "sacrifice his own purity of soul." For some few moments at least, it seems, he may himself have been fully or half-deceived concerning his divine claims:

Am I *not* Hakeem? . . .

A man among such beasts
Was miracle enough.

Colombe's Birthday

Colombe of Ravenstein freely gives up temporal power and personal honor for genuine love of one of her subjects. A glimpse into her naturally kind heart is seen as she gives favors upon her birthday, giving "greater pleasure" to herself in doing these favors. But the great revelation of her character is made when she is offered the restoration of her forfeited Duchy, the prospective rank of Empress if she will marry the claimant to the throne, — a man not ignoble but who does not offer love. Her subject, Valence, the "nameless" advocate of Cleves, is worn and burdened with the griefs and wrongs of his townsfolk, placing the cause of his fellow citizens above his own personal interests. His pleadings for their uplift arouse Colombe to her first keen sympathy with her people, and awaken her to the opportunities of rule.

Valence says to her :

There is a vision in the heart of each
Of justice, mercy, wisdom, tenderness
To wrong and pain, and knowledge of its cure :
And these embodied in a woman's form
That best transmits them, pure as first received,
From God above her, to mankind below.
Will you derive your rule from such a ground,
Or rather hold it by the suffrage, say,
Of this man — this — and this ?

He places loyalty to her above his own prospects of happiness, and quenching his own love for the queen, faithfully pleads before her the offer of marriage made by Prince Berthold, his royal rival. When Colombe shows him a tender token of regard, he struggles with his love :

What drew this on me? — on me dead once,
She thus bids live, — since all I hitherto
Thought dead in me, youth's ardors and emprise,
Burst into life before her, as she bids
Who needs them. Whither will this reach, where end?
Her hand's print burns on mine . . . Yet, she's above —
So very far above me! All's too plain:
I served her when the others sank away,
And she rewards me as such souls reward —
The changed voice, the suffusion of the cheek,
The eye's acceptance, the expressive hand,
— Reward, that's little, in her generous thought,
Though all to me. . .

I cannot so disclaim
 Heaven's gift, not call it other than it is!
 She loves me.

But as he glances at the Prince's papers:

Which love, these, perchance, forbid.
 Can I decide against myself — pronounce
 She is the Duchess and no mate for me?
 Cleves, help me! Teach me, — every haggard face, —
 To sorrow and endure! I will do right
 Whatever be the issue. Help me, Cleves!

And when, at the close of the play, he is privileged
 to proffer a request, again he puts back his own
 personal happiness and pleads:

. . . redress the wrongs of Cleves!

The noble queen turns with no regret from her
 one year of court life, and bestows herself upon this
 advocate of the poor.

A Soul's Tragedy

Chiappino is that type of so-called patriot who
 seeks his own interests while pretending concern
 for the welfare of the people. He can talk of his
 own humanitarian deeds. For more popularity he
 takes to himself the credit of the attempt upon the
 Provost's life. Continuing a series of tragic steps
 downward, he adroitly changes his politics, hop-

ing to be made the administrator of the new Republic, — the unsuspected trap of the legate.

One interpreter of this character would have us be thankful for the early career of this man, for his advocacy of those good causes for the people's betterment. Truly, if he has any claim to possessing the spirit of helpfulness, it must be in those early days, before his inner retrogression warns from his self-centered life.

Luria

Browning's own favorite among his dramas, *Luria*, has the truly great, unselfish character, Luria, the Moor. Nobility in an alien has been called the theme of the tragedy. Hired by Florence to win her battles, he is the victim of a contemptible conspiracy. He has labored for the success of "Beautiful Florence" with his heart's true devotion. He is trusted by her leaders to win their victory, but they will not trust him with power after the victory. All about him are, in differing degrees, his enemies, except his one Moorish confidant.

Braccio, his antithesis in character, is Luria's chief accuser. His conclusion concerning man's motives is:

Man seeks his own good at the whole world's cost.

He is conducting a secret trial, the false findings of which will make Luria's moment of victory in battle the moment of his death sentence.

But the ingenuous nature of Luria is above suspicion and jealousy. He tears unread the intercepted letter which would have warned him of the perfidy of the Florentine leaders. He says:

And act on what I read! What act were fit?
 If the firm-fixed foundations of my faith
 In Florence, which to me stands for Mankind,
 — If that breaks up. . .

What would the world be worth? Whose love be sure?
 Yes: I trust Florence — Pisa is deceived!

* * *

You need me now. . .

For a moment, under the stress of the temptation, he thinks of revenge:

Florence withstands me? — I will punish her!

But after his great victory for the Florentines, when he knows the truth of all the treachery, and when urged to take revenge, — both the armies at his call — he utters one of the most magnanimous sentiments ever expressed by man:

Shall it console me, that my Florentines
 Walk with a sadder step, a graver face . . . !

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He had even sought in himself for the cause of his treatment:

My fault, it must have been.

As he falls in death — at his own hands — Braccio has just sued for pardon; Domizia has been lifted to a new experience of forgiveness; and all acknowledge his greatness of soul. Tiburzio, who had urged his betrayal of Florence, pays the rare tribute to the influence of a true leader:

A people is but the attempt of many
To rise to the completer life of one —
And those who live as models for the mass
Are singly of more value than they all.
Such man are you, and such a time as this
That your sole fate concerns a nation more
Than its apparent welfare; and to prove
Your rectitude, and duly crown the same,
Imports it far beyond the day's event,
Its battle's loss or gain — the mass remains,
Keep but the model safe, new men will rise
To study it, and other days to prove
How great a good was Luria's having lived.

Loving and trusting Florence, knowing that she had dealt falsely with him, yet sparing her, — this in Luria truly is transcendent brotherhood.

CHAPTER FOUR

DRAMATIC LYRICS, ROMANCES, MEN AND WOMEN, AND DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Love among the Ruins

Evening in the Roman Campagna, amid the ruins of ancient cities, amid decaying columns and temples — into this scene of time's desolations came a golden-haired girl with eager eyes of love to meet her lover. The lover as he approached —

. . . looked upon the city, every side,

Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'

Colonnades,

All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts, — and then,

All the men!

When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,

Either hand

On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace

Of my face,

Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech

Each on each.

Then in one pregnant closing stanza Browning

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contrasts the tragic valor of the centuries with the joys of love :

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
 South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
 As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force —
 Gold, of course.
Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
 Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
 Love is best.

Love is better than the triumphs and glories of earth's centuries of valorous deeds. This apotheosis of love is so well expressed that I include two stanzas as an example of Browning's treatment of this emotion so basic in his conception of brotherhood, and also because the content of the term to Browning was a rich, unselfish one.

Saul

The poem *Saul*, one of Browning's masterpieces, makes an invaluable contribution to the thought of brotherhood.

The most helpful social relations are exhibited in stanza seven :

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Then I played the help-tune of the reapers, their wine-song,
when hand

Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and great
hearts expand

And grow one in the sense of this world's life. — And then, the
last song

When the dead man is praised on his journey — "Bear, bear
him along

With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets! Are balm-
seeds not here

To console us? The land has none left such as he on the bier.
Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!" — And then, the
glad chaunt

Of the marriage, — first go the young maidens, next, she whom
we vaunt

As the beauty and pride of our dwelling. — And then, the great
march

Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an arch
Naught can break; who shall harm them, our friends?

This is, however, but the foot-hill. The poem
soon ascends the mount of vision from which
David beholds the world's coming Burden-bearer.

David's ministry to Saul was the ministry of
human compassion and sympathy. In his own
heart there was the passion of service and of self-
sacrifice. His yearning to impart fuller blessings
to Saul points the way to God, the source and be-
stower of all blessings. God's love is fully equal
to his power. If he, the limited creature, longs to

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help Saul, how surpassingly wonderful will be the deeds of the omnipotent Creator for Saul! The very nature of the All-powerful is Love! The incarnate God, Jesus Christ, is to come to the needy world to manifest, that beyond infinite power is infinite love. —

"In the least of things have faith, yet distrust in the greatest of all?

Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here, the parts shift?

Here, the creature surpass the Creator, — the end, what Began?
Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man,
And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who yet alone can?

* * *

Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou — so wilt thou!

And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
One spot for the creature to stand in! . . .

* * *

As thy love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being beloved."

The resources of heaven drawn upon to serve a wayward man! Truly this is a sublime and holy lyric of service, human and divine! ¹⁴

¹⁴ Browning's conception of the function of love is based on his belief in its divine origin. Twice at least, in *Easter Day* and *Saul*, his characters work out from an overpowering recognition of God's omniscience and omnipotence to a final recognition that his love is equal in scope with his power and knowledge. And he counts human

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An Epistle

Containing the Strange Medical Experience of
Karshish, the Arab Physician

Karshish has been perplexed but profoundly impressed by the story of the strange "mania" of Lazarus. He cannot shake off the marvelous spell, for if Lazarus' tale be true — and he almost fully believes it — then there is "humanity in the Godhead," and infinite power and infinite love are joined. Wonder fills his soul as he dares contemplate that

So, the All-Great were the All-Loving too!

The Guardian-Angel

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave

That child, when thou hast done with him, for me! —

Thus the author prays to the angel, the "bird of God" in Guercino's painting, to protect him. If the angel grants his petition he will be soothed and —

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!

I think how I should view the earth and skies

And sea, when once again my brow was bared

service as most complete when, as in David before Saul, it reaches out to God's love and recruits its failing forces from the divine source.

— Myra Reynolds: *Robert Browning*.

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After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.

What further may be sought for or declared?

"If we could only see the end from the beginning," says William Lyon Phelps, "if we could get the angel's view-point, the final result would be beauty. Browning is not satisfied with Keats's doctrine

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, — that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

He shows us what happened to Aprile with this philosophy. Browning adds the doctrine of love. The moment we realize that the universe is conceived in terms of beauty, love fills our hearts: love for our fellow-beings, who are making the journey with us; and love for God, the author of it all, just as a child loves one who gives it the gift of its heart's desire. That the supreme duty of life is love is simply one more illustration of Browning's steadfast adherence to the Gospel of Christ."¹⁵

Incident of the French Camp

The patriotic fortitude of the loyal French boy,
who with breast almost shot in two, gallops to Napoleon with the news,

¹⁵ Phelps, William Lyon: *Browning, How to Know Him*.

We've got you Ratisbon!

only to fall, smiling, dead, deserves a place in our hall of those famous ones who are unselfishly true to trust even to the death.

The Patriot

An Italian patriot on his way to the scaffold tells of his year of toil for the good of the people. He says:

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
To give it my loving friends to keep!
Naught man could do, have I left undone:
And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

* * *

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Yet he harbors no bitter thoughts. He endures ingratitude and cruelty, and is quiet in spirit, conscious both of his own sincere purpose to have served the people and also of the approbation of God. Since the thankless people have not requited him, he feels the surer of heaven's reward:

'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.

Here is a genuine hero, one who could have

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answered in the affirmative the searching question propounded to Paracelsus:

Wilt thou adventure for my sake and man's
Apart from all reward? ¹⁶

Count Gismond

Count Gismond has been called Browning's hero. He was the champion of an insulted orphan maiden, being the only man present who realized the offense. The insulting words were hardly out of the accuser Gauthier's mouth before the Count had given him "the fist's reply to the filth." He then slew the offender, first compelling him to confess to the young woman that he "had lied to God and to her."

My Last Duchess and *The Flight of the Duchess*

A study in the jealousy of egoism, is what Arthur Symons calls *My Last Duchess*, — denominating the arrogantly cruel Duke "a typical autocrat of the Renaissance, with his serene self-composure of selfishness."

¹⁶ *Luria, A Soul's Tragedy, The Patriot*, in different tones speak the same spirit, and give the same warning that he who would serve his fellow men must expect as his reward misunderstanding, ingratitude, and scorn; and that his sole support must be in the consciousness of his own integrity and God's approval. — Miss C. M. Whitehead in Berdoe: *Browning Studies*.

No wonder the Duchess in *The Flight of the Duchess* pined in the companionship of the cold-blooded, heartless Duke and his "hell-cat" mother. But the old Gypsy crone transformed her by lavishing sympathy and love upon her, and the Duchess fled with her liberator. These poems, not at all to force an allegorical interpretation, suggest that a human soul cannot truly live without the loving sympathy of other human beings:

Love is the only good in the world.

An appreciative reading of these two poems reveals that all fettering conventionalities should be struck to the death, and all arbitrary, unsympathetic domination should cease. They show sympathy with the progress of woman. Man or woman is to be judged by soul merit, not by the obsolete standard of sex. Man is not to patronize woman; but they are to render to each other mutual regard, mutual esteem, mutual honor, and mutual service.

A Grammarian's Funeral

In counting up those who give their lives to a cause — their task — be it ever so small, we must not fail to include the grammarian, the typical student of the new spirit of the revival of learning.

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Though devoted to an exceedingly small field of human research, yet did he not fulfill the injunction to better the race by the life of daily toil? His encomium is brief but heartfelt:

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.

* * *

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar.

His students honoring him carry his body to the top of the mountain: —

Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live, but Know —
Bury this man there?
Here — here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send!
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him — still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Holy Cross Day

Holy Cross Day is, to me, a summons, a plea for

larger fellowship. It is a contrasting study to those of human brotherhood. Dramatically does it portray "man's inhumanity to man." According to the story, the Jews of Rome are compelled to attend an annual Christian sermon, and the poem graphically depicts the attitude of the oppressed listeners. Other indignities and outrages upon the Jews are enumerated, the poem closing with a noble invocation to the justice and sympathy of Christ. The comic, the ridiculous, the pathetic, and the sublime jostle each other in the author's vigorous and masterly phrases. In its grim satire it is a companion-piece to Shylock's noble plea for a despised race.¹⁷

A later poem, *Filippo Baldinucci on the Privilege of Burial*, forms a true counterpart, picturing again the persecutions to which Jews were sub-

¹⁷ A compensating gain of this breadth of view is a corresponding breadth of sympathy. There is a perfectly unique catholicity in his affinities. Life in its shame as well as its splendour, life in its baseness, its distorted aims, its tragic failures, its limitless follies, is still life to him, and is worthy of his compassionate scrutiny. His unconventionality is startling to ordinary readers; they never know where to find Browning, or can anticipate what he will say or teach. Thus, even for the Jew in the Ghetto he has a good word. He interprets what may be the unspoken word in the heart of many a Hebrew outcast. The Jew has slain the Christ, and so has missed the one vast opportunity of Jewish history; but is there no excuse? Is there no room for pity or apology?—W. J. Dawson: *Makers of Modern Poetry*.

jected in Italy. A persecutor — with manifest regret — restrains his nephew by saying:

I fear we must not pelt the Jews —

but tells a story of his youth, before the laws were enacted by the “modern fools,” a prank the “Christians” played on the Jews. To “gall the unbelievers” they built a shrine and had upon it the Virgin Mary painted so as to face the Jew’s burial ground, just where it would be the most annoying. Induced by a bag of ducats, the farmer on whose farm the shrine had been built agreed to remove the fresco, but enraged the Jews by substituting for it a scene of the Crucifixion.

Coarse inhumanity — teaching by indirect suggestion the need of brotherhood — might be called the burden of this would-be jocular but brutal episode.

Fra Lippo Lippi

The frolicsome monk Fra Lippo Lippi gives us a clear truth that even art is not “for art’s sake,” but for humanity’s sake:

. . . Art was given for that;
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out.

James Lee’s Wife

The heroine of *James Lee’s Wife*, a plain-look-

ing woman, was unfortunately married to a shallow, inconstant man. She, only, had realized that "love greatens and glorifies." At the last she makes the sacrifice to her husband's happiness in leaving him. In doing this she herself glorifies love in its "eternal might." Life became to her not the recipient, childish attitude, but was for unselfish deeds, — "use." Thus in her individual relations she exemplified not the "craving love that cometh in, but the love that goeth forth." It is the heroic, renunciative wife that can say:

Make the low nature better by your throes!
Give earth yourself, go up for gain above.

The Worst of It

The husband, the wronged one, persuades himself that he is the one to blame for the wife's unfaithfulness: —

. . . you saved me — saved in vain
If you ruined yourself, and all through me.

He desires her to be happy and to be good; and although loving on he declares, in full unselfishness, that he will not in Paradise even so much as turn his face toward her.

Rabbi Ben Ezra

The virile old Rabbi tells his own creed of altru-

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ism and the life of service and of our nearness to God, if we bestow rather than receive:

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:

* * *

Rejoice we are allied
To That which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.

We are to give our care to the "uses" of the cup:

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,

* * *

So, take and use Thy work.

"Of life in time and eternity," Austin Foster interprets the poem to say, "service is at once the sanction and the inspiration."¹⁸

In the passages expressing the duty of self-cul-

¹⁸ Foster, Austin: *The Message of Robert Browning*.

Mr. Foster also makes the following comment upon Browning's putting the lofty sentiment of this poem in the mouth of a Jew: The Jew has been "one of the most despised of earth's many children for centuries." . . . Yet it "is to Browning's eternal credit that in placing the utterance of his matured wisdom in the mouth of Rabbi Ben Ezra, he has dared to reinstate the race of the Jewish people once more in the ranks of the respectable, and to claim for them the wider atmosphere of a more tolerant charity."

ture and enrichment in art and beauty — "All good things are ours" — Miss Whitehead ¹⁹ sees a sane antidote for extreme social theories: "Here in *Rabbi Ben Ezra* we have a corrective to that spirit of reform which takes possession of a philanthropic age to the exclusion of all care for self-discipline, when there is much hurry to set other people's minds and houses in order, while the reformer's own house and mind are in urgent need of attention. The highest altruism is that our best tribute to the world is to be our highest selves."

A Death in the Desert

In a cave, hidden from persecutors, and roused for a few moments from the unconsciousness of approaching death, the Apostle of Love, the apologist for the Christian faith, reasons with solemn majesty that power, intelligence, and love have not their source in man. Man-made, anthropomorphic gods would be as Caliban's Setebos, — "loving not, hating not."

To John —

. . . life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
And hope and fear, —believe the aged friend, —
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is.

¹⁹ Whitehead, Miss C. M. in Berdoo: *Browning Studies*.

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Where love is, there is God, and there is Christ also. —

Love tops the might, the Christ in God.

John would have all put their knowledge of God to use. He himself did so:

If I live yet, it is for good, more love
Through me to men.

The Bactrian with him was a wild, untutored man, yet, won by the affection of the aged Christian, he was a member of the fellowship of love.

If the Apostle could continue to be of service, he would for a century still absent himself from the glories of heaven:

For if there be a further woe than such,
Wherein my brothers struggling need a hand,
So long as any pulse is left in mine,
May I be absent even longer yet,
Plucking the blind ones back from the abyss,
Though I should tarry a new hundred years!

Apparent Failure

To those who are critical and unbrotherly toward their fellows, the three suicides in the Paris Morgue would seem complete, absolute failures. But the poet's attitude is not of the holier-than-thou kind. These victims once had strong aspira-

tions. God fashioned them: they were sacred because of this. Were they not fellow-beings, for whom the Infinite Father-God could change worst into best?

The author's high evaluation of the essential worth of any and every human being is, to me, a strong supporting pillar of his superstructure of brotherhood.²⁰

²⁰ His sympathies go out irresistibly toward every sort of life, however strangely mistaken or at variance with custom, which has real, throbbing, energetic vitality in it.

To him there is an overwhelming fascination in misunderstood men, and the more tangled and intricate the problem of character and action the more eagerly does he approach it. . . The majority of his poems which deal with character and conduct deal with character and conduct more or less imperfect. In all such cases the blemish is laid bare with unerring accuracy. There are no glozing words to cover moral lapses. . . But Browning describes such lives not to display their corruption, but to discover some seed of true life which may yet be hidden in them.—W. J. Dawson: *Makers of Modern Poetry*.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Ring and the Book

In Browning's stupendous masterpiece, the calculating and the uncalculating soul, the egoist and the altruist, the self-seeker and the self-abnegating one — Guido and Caponsacchi — are in heightened contrast the tragic combatants in the intense arena of Pompilia's world.

Guido, boastful of the privileges of aristocracy, using a church office for personal advantage, pretending a regard for the law yet regarding the rights of no one, rebuked by Pompilia's purity of character, hates her for her goodness. Selfish, hypocritical, cruel, loathsome, he is the embodiment of self-seeking and misanthropy. Seeking to mend the broken fortunes of his ancient family, he enters into a pact for a wife, whom he treats as a mere chattel. This wife-beater at last succeeds in publicly entrapping her. He scoffs at love, brutally calling Pompilia —

. . . a hawk,
I bought at hawk's price and carried home
To do hawk's service. . .

So, hoodwink, starve, and properly train my bird,
And, should she prove a haggard, — twist her neck! ^{21a}

In domestic love, a wolf; in social worth, a derelict, with no thought beyond his own depraved interests; thrice a murderer, yet he can inquire insolently what Society has to charge him with, — he has done his "mere duty!" Hypocritically and blasphemously he summarizes his pursuing Pompilia to her death, when he says to his judges:

. . . The task seemed superhuman, still
I dared and did it, trusting God and law;
And they approved of me: give praise to both! ^{21b}

Caponsacchi, a gallant, romantic, social figure, is awakened to nobility and spirituality by accepting the unsought task of helping Pompilia in direst need:

No harm save to self . . .
If as a man, then much more as a priest
I held me bound to help weak innocence:
If so my worldly reputation burst,
Being the bubble it is, why, burst it may.

* * *

Nor either of us thought a thought, much less
Spoke a word which the Virgin might not hear. ^{21c}

²¹ *The Ring and the Book*:

a. Book V, 703-709.

b. Book V, 2050-2052.

c. Book III, 1351 ff.

The narrator *Tertium Quid* renders it:

He saw the sole and single course to take —
 Bade her dispose of him, head, heart, and hand,
 Did her behest and braved the consequence,
 Not for the natural end, the love of man
 For woman whether love be virtue or vice,
 But, please you, altogether for pity's sake —
 Pity of innocence and helplessness;^{21d}

Before the court, called back the second time,
 Caponsacchi boldly remonstrates:

. . . law might take
 Service like mine, of brain and heart and hand,
 In good part. Better late than never, law!
 You understand of a sudden, gospel too
 Has a claim here, may possibly pronounce
 Consistent with my priesthood, worthy Christ,
 That I endeavored to save Pompilia.^{21e}

After hesitating and shrinking from the course,
 he saw that —

Duty to God is duty to her. . .

The easier way would have been to have shielded
 himself behind the conventionalities of traditional
 priestly isolation; but the glory^{21f} of Caponsacchi

d. Book IV, 991-997.

e. Book VI, 134-140.

f. Miss C. M. Whitehead, Berdoo: *Browning Studies*.*

* The great reforms for good, courageous warfare against crying evils, have to be carried on more or less by lonely workers in the teeth

consists in his grasping the essence of Christianity in its service to those in need, and in his determining to save Pompilia in spite of consequences to himself:

Sirs, I obeyed. Obedience was too strange, —
 This new thing that had been struck into me
 By the look o' the lady, — to dare to disobey
 The first authoritative word. 'Twas God's.
 I had been lifted to the level of her,
 Could take such sounds into my sense. I said
 "We two are cognisant o' the Master now;
 It is she bids me bow the head: how true,
 I am a priest! I see the function here;
 I thought the other way self-sacrifice:
 This is the true, seals up the perfect sum.
 I pay it, sit down, silently obey." ^{21g}

* * *

To Rome as if the road burned underneath!
 Reach Rome, then hold my head in pledge, I pay
 The run and the risk to heart's content. ^{21h}

Again to the judges Caponsacchi shows their duty:

of an opposition which does not come only from the avowed enemies of good, but from those bound by every claim to help them. . . . Caponsacchi thought the other way was "self-sacrifice" till he learnt that to save a fellow-creature, even if he undid himself in the doing it, was the true sealed up perfect man. — Miss C. M. Whitehead, *Ber-doe: Browning Studies*.

g. Book VI, 1010-1021.

h. Book VI, 1147-1149.

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. . . I saved his wife
Against law ; against law he slays her now :
Deal with him !

* * *

She only tried me when some others failed.²¹ⁱ

Both have preserved their honor :

. . . Stay thought from smirching her
The snow-white soul that angels fear to take
Untenderly. But all the same, I know
I too am taintless, and I bare my breast.^{21j}

Pompilia's tribute to Caponsacchi's humanity, unselfishness, and nobility is rare and touching. She had said to Caponsacchi, when beseeching his aid :

You serve God specially, as priests are bound,
And care about me, stranger as I am,
So far as wish my good, — that miracle
I take to intimate He wills you serve
By saving me, — what else can He direct ?
Here is the service.^{21k}

Dying, she thinks in tenderest, holiest gratitude of her "soldier-saint" :

So, let him wait God's instant men call years ;
Meantime hold hard by truth and his great soul,
Do out the duty ! Through such souls alone

i. Book VI, 1858 ff.

j. Book VI, 194-197.

k. Book VII, 1429-1434.

God stooping shows sufficient of His light
 For us i' the dark to rise by. And I rise.²¹¹

And if we need any more testimony to the unselfish, knightly, and humane bearing of this falsely accused priest, we have it in the commendation of the reverend Pope:

For see this priest, this Caponsacchi, stung
 At the first summons, — help for honor's sake,
 Play the man, pity the oppressed! no pause, —
 How does he lay about him in the midst,
 Strike any foe, right any wrong, at any risk; ^{21m}

. . . Ay, such championship
 Of God at first blush, such prompt cheery thud
 Of glove on ground that answers ringily
 The challenge of the false knight, — watch we long
 And wait we vainly for its gallant like
 From those appointed to the service.

* * *

. . . Well done! ²¹ⁿ

l. Book VII, 1841-1845.

m. Book X, 1557 ff.

n. Book X, 1155 ff.

CHAPTER SIX

LATER POEMS

Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau

Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Savior of Society, who represents Napoleon III, is not a reformer! The poet has let the Emperor state in detail his attitude of conservative opportunism. If the average life of man were one hundred years instead of twenty years, he avers he might have attempted reform.

The Emperor explains that he had conceived it his mission to be a conservor, — to save to society what he had found of social institutions, and not attempt to make new conditions:

. . . I hope
No better, nothing newer for mankind,
But something equably smoothed everywhere,
Good, reconciled with hardly-quite-as-good,
Instead of good and bad each jostling each.
“And that’s all?” Ay, and quite enough for me!
We have toiled so long to gain what gain I find
I’ the Present, — let us keep it! We shall toil
So long before we gain — if gain God grant —

A Future with one touch of difference
 I' the heart of things, and not their outside face, —
 Let us not risk the whiff of my cigar
 For Fourier, Comte, and all that ends in smoke!

He argues that he is not a reformer because, first, he was not fitted to be one; because, in the second place, sweeping reforms are not God's plan in development: "God takes time"; and because, again, the world as we find it with its apparent evils is of God, and no man can improve it. He has concerned himself with the physical wants of the people, and has not strained at remote ideals, nor attempted to "mend God's mistakes":

"Not bread alone," but bread before all else
 For these: the bodily wants serve first, said I.

He has held affairs stable for twenty years, and in doing this he thinks he has wrought good service for humanity.

He stigmatizes war for war's sake as "the dry-rot of the race"; yet he justifies his entering to help Italy in the war against Austria as "war for the hate of war."

Pacchiarotto

Pacchiarotto is a satire upon any self-assumed work of bettering the world. *Pacchiarotto* took "Reform" for his motto. Things in general need-

ed reforming, and he felt that he was the man to show what the wrong was and what the right was. He painted in fresco on every square foot of the sides of his grotto men of all sorts and conditions. To each station he preached its duty, and the men created by plaster and pigments, by paint-pot and mortar, were very tractable. Not so the real men of Siena, however. A company of men were proposing to

Make Poverty Wealth and Wealth Poverty,
Unloose Man from overt and covert tie,
And straight out of social confusion
True Order would spring!

But the poet characterizes this as

Brave illusion —
Aims heavenly attained by means earthy!

Into this group sprang Pacchiarotto, hinting himself for leader. But he had to flee from their cursings and cuffings, and took refuge with a verminous corpse. Here for two days he groaned:

Good Saints, and I promise I'll
Abjure all ambitions of preaching
Change.

Then reaching a convent of monks, he is admonished by the Abbott:

For — why shall I shrink from asserting? —

Myself have had hopes of converting
 The foolish to wisdom; till, sober,
 My life found its May grow October.
 I talked and I wrote, but, one morning,
 Life's autumn bore fruit in this warning:
 "Let tongue rest, and quiet thy quill be!
 Earth is earth and not heaven, and ne'er will be."
 Man's work is to labor and leaven —
 As best he may — earth here with heaven;
 Let him work on and on as if speeding
 Work's end, but not dream of succeeding!
 Because if success were intended,
 Why heaven would begin ere earth ended.

Back Pacchiarotto goes to his palette and mahlstick, saying:

And as for Man — let each and all stick
 To what was prescribed them at starting.

Browning does not intend to check reforms and reformers; but he does impeach all ill-guided efforts.

Tray, Donald, Arcades Ambo, and The Lady and the Painter

The extent of Browning's cosmos, the area over which brotherhood obtained with him, included the lower animals. Several entire poems deal with this humane attitude. In *Saul* occurs the affirmation that man and all creatures constitute one family:

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God made all the creatures and gave them our love and our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one family here.

The poem *Tray* is a protest against vivisection. Browning was vice-president of a society for the protection of animals. He once wrote: "I despise and abhor the pleas on behalf of that infamous practice, vivisection."

No bystander had ventured to rescue the drowning beggar-child; but the courageous dog Tray dived for her and brought her up alive. Why he plunged again into the water no one knew; but after a long time under, he swam to land bringing in his mouth the child's doll!

The onlookers congratulated themselves upon their possession of reason, and boasted of the superiority of man over the dog. Then comes the biting sarcasm of the poet: one of these superior beings possessed of reason would reward the brave dog by having him vivisected — to settle a little point suggested by the incident:

"Now, did you ever? Reason reigns
In man alone, since all Tray's pains
Have fished — the child's doll from the slime!"

And so, amid the laughter gay,
Trotted my hero off,—old Tray, —
Till somebody, prerogated
With reason reasoned: "Why he dived,
His brain would show us, I should say.

"John, go and catch — or, if needs be,
 Purchase — that animal for me!
 By vivisection, at expense
 Of half-an-hour and eighteenpence,
 How brain secretes dog's soul, we'll see!"

To the belief that sportsmanship precludes cruelty and deception, *Donald* furnished a passionate No. Donald was a sportsman first — and a man afterwards. How clever a sportsman's feat, he thought, to stab the gigantic stag as with velvet steps the animal carries his hoofs over the prostrate, breast upward, form of the hunter! So, forgetting honor, humanity, and the implied contract of the passing at the dangerous ledge, he treacherously drove his knife into the "stomach's soft of the passing body!

"Ingrate" is the poet's hissed comment.

In *Arcades Ambo* the author reminds us that we call one who runs away from battle a coward; he calls the vivisector a coward, for he hides from death behind the lower animals, that are tortured —

Cut up alive to guess what suits
 My case and saves my toe from shoots.

The Lady and the Painter is a condemnation of the custom of wearing the wings of owls, hawks, jays, and swallows at the behest of Fashion. The painter defends his profession of reverence for

womanhood though using the living model in his study of art; but asks of his critic, Lady Blanche:

What
— (Excuse the interruption) — clings
Half-savage-like around your hat?

* * *

You — clothed with murder of his best
Of harmless beings. . .!

Pietro of Abano

Pietro of Abano is a poem that should be studied by all those who would benefit their fellow man. Pietro is a magician, full of power and knowledge, and these he has used to benefit his fellow beings. Yet, because he has not love in his heart for his fellows, — the love that begets self-sacrifice — his good deeds are met with curses, insult, and persecution. All his works have been wrought by power, and not unselfishly from the heart. An astute Greek, in the power of the magician, exploits the powers of Pietro. Promising gratitude, he asks Pietro to grant him power to raise men by being himself raised above them:

Grant me leave to make my kind wise, free, and happy! How?
Just by making me — as you are mine — their model!

This request for superiority does not bear the mark of true love's humility.

Again the Greek comes to Pietro with a second request:

Teach me, then, to rule men, have them at my pleasure!
Solely for their good, of course.

His contemptible attitude toward men is shown by his conclusion to indulge their delusions:

Foolishly I turned disgusted from my fellows!
Pits of ignorance — to fill, and heaps of prejudice — to level —
Multitudes in motley, whites and blacks and yellows —
What a hopeless task it seemed to discipline the host!
Now I see my error. . . .

Man shall keep what seemed to thwart him.

The poet comments:

Brief, so worked the spell, he promptly had a riddance:
Heart and brain no longer felt the pricks which passed for conscience-scruples.

Yet a third power he realized, to rule the souls of men, and he became Pope. Thus, by the power of Pietro, the Greek gained wealth, temporal power, and then spiritual power; — at each stage, however, refusing to return gratitude to the suppliant Pietro, and concerned only with power for himself.

But the Greek awakes from the spell, repulsed as the black-door of the magician "shut bang!" Pietro lives out his life, and neither does he learn the way of love:

O Peter, still thy taste of Love's to come!

And sardonically to the Greek the poet says:

Greek, was your ambition likewise doomed to failure?

True, I find no record you wore purple, walked with axe and
fasces,

Played some antipope's part: still, friend, don't turn tail, you're
Certain, with but these two gifts, to gain earth's prize in time!
Cleverness uncurbed by conscience — if you ransacked

Peter's book you'd find no potent spell like these to rule the
masses;

Nor should want example, had I not to transact
Other business. Go your ways, you'll thrive!

So ends my rhyme.

Jochanan Hakkadosh

Jochanan Hakkadosh, a Jewish Rabbi, is asked to state how men should love. Tsaddick, the scholar, in urging the pupils of Jochanan Hakkadosh to give up part of their lives in order that their teacher, who is at the point of death, may attain his fourscore years, queries:

. . . Do I need acquaint

The Chosen how self-sacrifice ensures

Tenfold requital?

From the many disciples who would give from their lives some years to extend the life of their Rabbi, he accepts one year each sacrificed by four: a married lover, a warrior, a poet, and a statesman.

The Rabbi believes in the might of peace, and when Age replies to the "prattle" of Youth's arguments for war, he exclaims:

. . . Show us the evil cured by violence,
Submission cures not also!

The venerable teacher is convinced that happiness in this world and in the world to come is found by acting from the generous impulses: the whole duty of man is to learn to love:

. . . Shall I boast
My rough work — warfare — helped more?
Loving, now —
That by comparison, seems wiser.

Ferishtah's Fancies

Ferishtah, the Persian dervish, is a lover of humanity, and his profound conclusions concerning life's problems and mysteries take a decidedly altruistic trend.²²

Shah Abbas presents again the contrast between belief and love, or the superiority of the heart over the head. Ishak, who after ten years had come back home safe and sound, had been reported as

²² Mrs. Sutherland Orr says of *Ferishtah's Fancies*: "The Theistic philosophy which makes the individual the center of the universe is, perhaps, nowhere in his works so distinctly set forth as in this latest of them. But nowhere either has he more distinctly declared that the fullest realization of the individual life is self-sacrifice."

slain in battle by twenty soldiers, who had seen him die. One loving son welcomed him with delight, while the other son would not disbelieve the report of his twenty seniors. The poet remarks:

A fool were Ishak if he failed to prize
Mere head's work less than heart's work: no fool he!

The interpreting lyric at the close enforces the truth that love is the true *sesame*: love is the guide through another's heart. Obstacles disappear before love as before a light a safer passage is made through a room:

Be love your light and trust your guide, with these explore my
heart!

No obstacle to trip you then, strike hands and souls apart!
Since rooms and heart are furnished so, — light shows you, —
needs love start?

The Family is another story defending the heart against the head. The eldest son, — called a wise humanity, — is commended for his impulse to pray for his parent's health even though such restoration seems contrary to the will of God.

The Sun shows man's search after God. The Dervish Ferishtah justifies the thought that God is sentient, a kindred being, and that his gifts should evoke praise and gratitude from man:

. . . gift claims gift's return,

. . . my part

Is plain — to meet, and match the gift and gift
With love and love, with praise and praise.

The duty of giving expression to love, shedding
it broadcast, is nowhere more beautifully set forth:

. . . love alike

Being once born, must needs have use. Man's part
Is plain — to send love forth, — astray, perhaps:
No matter, he has done his part.

In *Mihrab Shah* the presence of pain in the
world is justified by the bond of sympathy it
creates between man and man. An inquirer asks:

Wherefore should any evil hap to man —
From ache of flesh to agony of soul —
Since God's All-mercy mates All-potency?

To this question the dervish replies:

What were the bond 'twixt man and man, dost judge,
Pain once abolished?

* * *

Friend, here they are to find and profit by!
Put pain from out the world, what room were left
For thanks to God, for love to man?

. . . Thanks to God

And love to man, — from man take these away,
And what is man worth?

Two Camels has a message concerning asceti-
cism and self-sacrifice. A person is not to renounce

natural joys for his own sake. By their proper use he may be the better prepared to minister to the joy of others. It is, however, a surpassing joy to renounce joy for another's good: —

Just as I cannot, till myself convinced,
Impart conviction, so, to deal forth joy
Adroitly, needs must I know joy myself.
Renounce joy for my fellows' sake? That's joy
Beyond joy; but renounced for mine, not theirs?
Why, the physician called to help the sick,
Cries "Let me, first of all, discard my health!"
No, Son: the richness hearted in such joy
Is in the knowing what are gifts we give,
Not in a vain endeavor not to know!
Therefore, desire joy and thank God for it!

Life is not a question of fasting or feasting, —
but of doing the work of life:

. . . What imports
Fasting or feasting? Do thy day's work, dare
Refuse no help thereto, since help refused
Is hindrance sought and found.

The keynote of *A Pillar at Sebzevar*, the eleventh poem of *Ferishtah's Fancies*, is a sublime repetition of the favorite truth that love is better than knowledge. Knowledge never reaches victory; but love is victory, and has immediate access to God.

The pillar at Sebzevar stands so that it tells the

hours of the day. Its practical service can be made use of before half a hundred recondite questions are answered.

The pupil desires that knowledge, man's distinctive attribute, shall not be deposed. The sage replies:

. . . all I seem to know
Is — I know nothing save that love I can
Boundlessly, endlessly.

. . . knowledge means
Ever-renewed assurance by defeat
That victory is somehow still to reach,
But love is victory, the prize itself:
Love — trust to.

* * *

So let us say — not "Since we know, we love,"
But rather "Since we love, we know enough."

. . . Consider well!
Were knowledge all thy faculty, then God
Must be ignored: love gains him by first leap.

Duty-doing, — not working for the reward of the world's approval or its love, is the burden of the lyric just preceding the *Epilogue* of the *Fancies*:

"Loving! what claim to love has work of mine?
Concede my life were emptied of its gains
To furnish forth and fill work's strict confine,
Who works so for the world's sake — he complains

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With cause when hate, not love, rewards his pains.
I looked beyond the world for truth and beauty:
Sought, found, and did my duty."

Why I Am a Liberal

All that the poet can do is achieved through liberty. He, thus emancipated, dares not hold that his fellow men shall continue bound,

. . . Nor discuss
A brother's right to freedom. That is
"Why."

With George Bubb Dodington

George Bubb Dodington is one more leader who is not in the ranks of human fraternity. Symonds calls the poem "a piece of sardonic irony long drawn out, a Superior Rogue's Guide or Instructions for Knaves." The author, in essence, tells the hero-villain that the method of deceiving the people by trying to have them understand that all their interests are his interests is obsolete:

. . . Coarse flattery moves the gorge:
Mine were the mode to awe the many, George!
They guess you half despise them while most bent
On demonstrating that your sole intent
Strives for their service.

. . . Alack,
That well-worn lie is obsolete!

* * *

Say — you hold in contempt — not them in chief —
 But first and foremost your own self! No use
 In men but to make sport for you, induce
 The puppets now to dance, now stand stock-still,
 Now knock their heads together, at your will
 For will's sake only — while each plays his part
 Submissive: why? through terror at the heart:
 "Can it be — this bold man, whose hand we saw
 Openly pull the wires, obeys some law
 Quite above man's — nay, God's?" on face fall they.
 This was the secret missed, again I say,
 Out of your power to grasp conception of,
 Much less employ to purpose. Hence the scoff
 That greets your very name: folk see but one
 Fool more, as well as knave, in Dodington.

Ponte Dell' Angelo, Venice

Does not the Angel's Bridge at Venice, leading
 to a lawyer's home, speak eloquently of the Nem-
 esis that ever watches unbrotherly deeds?

An oppressive lawyer asked the holy chief of
 the Capucins to dine with him, hoping thereby to
 get out of his memory the widow whom he had
 recently wronged. The lawyer told the monk that
 an ape was his servant; but the monk found that the
 ape was in reality Satan sent to take the lawyer to
 his eternal punishment for his cruelty to widows
 and orphans.

At the table the monk accuses the lawyer of his

extortions; the lawyer promises restitution — and lo, the Devil takes a sudden departure, leaving in the wall of the home a breach which is thenceforth garrisoned by the figure of an angel.

Reverie

Deeply fitting it is that the triumphant poem *Reverie* stands with the exulting *Epilogue* at the close of Browning's published works. A passionate heart glows forth life's richest gleanings: — Love's almightiness, love's equality with power, shall some day be revealed. It is as if Paracelsus, grasping at life's fullest import, once more declared his great proportional discovery:

. . . with much power always much more love;
or as if we again trace the vibrant characters of
Karshish's timid-bold half-venture of wonder-
ment:

The All-Great — the All-loving too;
or anew David's prophetic vision beheld God's
love filling "infinitude wholly," almighty proved.
Only this last time in the reconciliation of Power
with Love, the monist penetrates ultimate reaches,
— past Earth's struggling and limited Good —
and radiantly beholds Power and Love forever
joined: — "Power is Love!"

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As Power's display, the same

Be Good's — praise forth shall flow
Unisonous in acclaim!

I have faith such end shall be:

From the first, Power was — I knew.
Life has made clear to me

That, strive but for closer view,
Love were as plain to see.

When see? When there dawns a day,

If not on the homely earth,

Then yonder, worlds away,

Where the strange and new have birth,
And Power comes full in play.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDINGS CONCERNING BROTHERHOOD

The hero in *Pauline*, Paracelsus, and Sordello, though too late to express in a life of deeds their altruism, yet won the struggle away from a self-centered heart to one of unselfish love for human kind.

In the dramas, through Pippa we saw the indissoluble oneness of the human family as the streams of influence from one obscure little girl benefited various groups of people; we saw King Charles holding to his duty to his subjects in spite of criticism from those who could not understand his complex situation; Valence chose ever what was for the advantage of those whom he represented, and well deserved the hand of the generous Colombe; and in the magnanimous Moor Luria there was exhibited such genuine brotherhood that he sacrificed his life for the interests of an alien city and people.

In the groups of poems published from 1844 to 1864, there was sounded the note that "Love is best." David in *Saul* passionately longed to be of

infinitely more service to the King than he had already been, this yearning leading him to apprehend that the All-wise, Omnipotent Creator is the All-loving Helper of men. Karshish caught a wavering glimpse of the union of infinite power and love in God. In *The Guardian Angel* a trinity of perfection is formed by duty's being added to beauty and love. The French soldier boy rendered the extreme possibility of devotion to a leader, loyalty even to death. The Patriot served the people and bore their ingratitude without bitterness. Count Gismond was the quick champion of wronged young womanhood. The Grammarian was an example of those who give their lives for a cause, even though a small one. James Lee's Wife possessed self-renouncing love; and the husband in *The Worst of It* is a worthy companion illustration. The venerable Rabbi Ben Ezra reminds us that we are nearer God when we bestow than when we receive: we are to be used by God. The dying Apostle John exhorts us that life is our chance to learn to love. Love is higher than the might of God; and the privilege of exhibiting this love in service to men is sufficient motive for postponing the entrance upon the enjoyment of the glories of heaven. Every human being, even the suicide,

Apparent Failure pleads, is sacred to God. He should be dealt with charitably. God will transmute apparent defeat into real victory.

The cause of brotherhood will always be the richer because the "soldier-saint" Caponsacchi threw to the winds conventional restrictions and staked reputation, life, and all to render assistance to one in need.

The later poems present Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau maintaining that God's plan is not that of sweeping, speedy reforms, but that the uplift of the race takes time; Pacchiarotto learning that the reformer must be unselfish and indulge in no Utopian schemes of converting earth suddenly into a perfect heaven; the magician Pietro not finding the path of true service because his work for mankind did not spring from a heart of love; and four disciples of Jochanan Hakkadosh giving up a year each of their lives to lengthen the days of their master on earth.

In all the vast territory covered by Browning's teeming works, we seem always to be in one world neighborhood. There is felt no stratification of the high and the low. Social distinctions are not drawn. There is no condescending patronage of the common people; no pity lavished on the "lower

classes;" no mention of the "submerged tenth;" no emphasis upon those "crowded down." Nobility appears as often among those in humble surroundings as among kings and queens. If there be any higher, as opposed to lower, among the children of Browning's mind, it is the self-attained victorious reaction of his hero's soul to all untoward influences, — the "breast-forward" attitude of him who was "ever a fighter, so — one fight more!"

To this world neighborhood, every individual life has the possibility of contributing something of genuine worth. Every one of these human beings is sacred to God. Whether rich or poor; learned or ignorant; good or bad; whether man or woman — Englishman, Italian, Jew, Arabian, or Moor; whether ruler, churchman, poet, day-laborer, Gypsy, silk-weaver, or suicide, each and all are inextricably woven into the community-fabric of this world's deeds. Each can resist, conquer, and rise to a real selfhood that can live a life of influence and power. "A fig for heredity" says Browning as he strips the pure white lily Pompilia of respectability of birth! A broad democracy, yes, a heavenly familyhood, the author pictures to us on all his catholic pages. A breath of the divine evaluation of personality refreshes life, for the au-

thor has portrayed "love for man because of his being in God, because of his high and immortal destiny."²³ Truly Browning's world-community is a fraternal family, because God's fatherhood unites all human beings into a real brotherhood.

This brotherhood includes all animal life. Man's contacts with the animal world should be marked by brotherly consideration, — for animals too are the creatures of the Heavenly Father's care. *Tray* and other poems give, in fact, Browning's personal hatred of vivisection, an abhorrence that caused him to say that he "would rather submit to the worst of deaths, so far as pain goes, than have a single dog or cat tortured on the pretence of sparing me a twinge or two."

The poems present with intimate appreciation and sympathetic treatment the institutions and social atmosphere of many different nations and epochs. The author is broad enough to be at home with other races, in other centuries, and under varied surroundings of different civilizations. This mastery of time was one of the elements of his universality of touch. Yet he was not oblivious to the progress of events around him. His dramas reveal sympathy with the spreading ideas of polit-

²³ Brooke, Stopford A.: *The Poetry of Robert Browning*.

ical freedom. *Mr. Sludge*, "*the Medium*" shows that he is alert to the rise of spiritualism. *Caliban upon Setebos*; or, *Natural Theology in the Island* makes clear his familiarity with the current theological controversies. *Paracelsus*, *Sordello*, and other poems show his profound knowledge of evolution and other scientific thought of his day. He championed liberty. He was a Liberal, for being free himself he desired all other men to be unbound. To his times he contributed an invincible faith in a moral universe, ruled by an all-wise and all-loving God; a more humanized scientific attitude, more tinged with reverence, humility, and love; and to the growth of individual progress and advanced political policies, a lifelong advocacy.

Throughout this world-family, love was to be the social bond. "Too much love" there never could be. A man is not a man until he knows unselfish love. Love is the means of furthering knowledge; it transcends mere intellectual energy. It must be manifested in every relation with one's fellows: we must send it forth unsparingly. Pain is justified by its creating a fellow-feeling of sympathy between men. Self-sacrifice is the highest life. Not sacrifice for its own sake: the greatest joy is to renounce joy for the profit of others. In

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this world arrogant power seems to rule; but in the ages to come when power is fully revealed, we shall see love, and shall know that power and love are one.

The world-old enemies of love and brotherhood are to give way. Selfishness dooms the individual to isolation, atrophy, and defeat; war stands condemned as the "dry rot" of civilization. No martial fury gluts his pages, — no laudation glamors of a false chivalry. Uniformly throughout the works of his long career is the clear, ringing challenge that wiser than hatred, violence, and warfare is the sweet, quiet force of mere love.

The poems present no consistent or definite scheme for social betterment, — other than that of love, ruling in every heart and manifesting itself outwardly in all the relations of life. Browning's favorite task and emphasis is on the development of the individual soul; yet not to the exclusion of the interests of social welfare.²⁴ His perfected individual rays forth love, even at the cost of individual pain and sacrifice. The "uses of the cup"

²⁴ If Wordsworth's was the priestly temperament, and Tennyson's is the artistic, it may be said that Browning's was something broader than both: the nobly human temperament, which cleaves to man, and seeks to understand his hopes and fears, and judges him by the standard of a catholic charity. — W. J. Dawson: *Makers of Modern Poetry*.

justify the rare art of its polishing. Self-enlargement and self-culture are the means of enhancing the value of the service to be rendered to humanity. True, Browning did not storm at evil conditions as did Carlyle, nor "preach discontent to the masses" as did Morris; yet everywhere he evidences an enthusiasm for man and an inveterate belief in man's social and moral progress.²⁵ His ideal reformer must not be short-sighted or self-seeking, as Pacchiarotto, Pietro, or a Dodington; but wise, noble, and unselfish, like a Luria, a Caponsacchi, or a Ferishtah. He warns that impatience, hurry, and insincere programs for instant, wholesale uplift only delay the far-stretching plans of God for the human race. But man is born to love; and in his works, by the life-development of his characters, by the precepts of his sages, by condemnation of opposing ideas and forces, and by the rich, concrete embodiment of the principle in fragrant, beautiful, efficient lives Robert Browning has bequeathed the imperishable legacy that brotherhood is a physiological fact, a social and industrial necessity, and the spiritual grace and completion of all right-living.

²⁵ He is far in advance of our institutional Christianity, and leads the column of our Christian socialism. — A. J. George: *Boston Browning Society Papers*.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF POEMS WITH CHARACTERS USED

	POEM	CHARACTER
1833	<i>Pauline</i>	Hero of <i>Pauline</i>
1835	<i>Paracelsus</i>	Paracelsus
1837	<i>Strafford</i>	Strafford
1840	<i>Sordello</i>	Sordello
1841	<i>Pippa Passes</i>	Pippa
1842	<i>King Victor and King Charles</i>	King Charles
1842	<i>Incident of the French Camp</i>	French Soldier Boy
1842	<i>Count Gismond</i>	Count Gismond
1842	<i>My Last Duchess</i>	The Duke
1843	<i>The Return of the Druses</i>	Djabal
1844	<i>Colombe's Birthday</i>	Colombe and Valence
1845	<i>Saul, Part I, Part II, 1855</i>	David
1845	<i>The Flight of the Duchess</i>	The Duchess
1846	<i>Luria</i>	Luria
1846	<i>A Soul's Tragedy</i>	Chiappino
1855	<i>An Epistle, containing the Strange Medical Expe- rience of Karshish, the Arab Physician</i>	Karshish
1855	<i>The Guardian Angel</i>	
1855	<i>The Patriot</i>	The Patriot
1855	<i>A Grammarian's Funeral</i>	The Grammarian
1855	<i>Holy Cross Day</i>	
1855	<i>Fra Lippo Lippi</i>	Fra Lippo Lippi
1855	<i>Love Among the Ruins</i>	
1864	<i>James Lee's Wife</i>	James Lee's Wife

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1864	<i>The Worst of It</i>	The Husband
1864	<i>Rabbi Ben Ezra</i>	Rabbi Ben Ezra
1864	<i>A Death in the Desert</i>	John the Apostle
1864	<i>Apparent Failure</i>	The Three Suicides
1868-9	<i>The Ring and the Book</i>	Guido
		Caponsacchi
		Pompilia
1871	<i>Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau, Savior of Society</i>	Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau
1876	<i>Pacchiarotto</i>	Pacchiarotto
1876	<i>Filippo Baldinucci on the Privilege of Burial</i>	Filippo Baldinucci
1879	<i>Tray</i>	The Dog Tray
1880	<i>Pietro of Abano</i>	Pietro and the Greek
1883	<i>Donald</i>	Donald
1883	<i>Jochanan Hakkadosh</i>	Jochanan Hakkadosh
1884	<i>Ferishtah's Fancies</i>	Ferishtah
	<i>Shah Abbas</i>	Shah Abbas
	<i>The Family</i>	The Eldest Son
	<i>The Sun</i>	
	<i>Mihrab Shah</i>	
	<i>Two Camels</i>	
	<i>A Pillar at Sebzevar</i>	
1885	<i>Why I am a Liberal</i>	
1887	<i>With George Bubb Dodington</i>	George Bubb Dodington
1890	<i>Ponte Dell' Angelo Venice</i>	The Lawyer
1890	<i>Arcades Ambo</i>	
1890	<i>The Lady and the Painter</i>	Lady Blanche and the Painter
1890	<i>Reverie</i>	

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